

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of enlarging a digital image displayed in a graphical user interface (GUI), the method comprising:

(a) selecting for enlargement a portion of an original image displayed in the GUI;
and

(b) displaying, adjacent to an enlarged image of the selected portion, an image of the remaining portion of the original image that was not selected for enlargement, wherein the remaining portion does not include image data displayed by the enlarged image.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

(c) determining if there is hidden supplemental data that corresponds to the selected portion, and, if so, the enlarged image revealing the hidden supplemental data.

3. The method of claim 2, further comprising:

(d) storing image data of the selected portion in a first memory location;
(e) storing image data of the remaining portion in a second memory location; and
(f) storing in a third memory location a table that correlates hidden supplemental data with selected image portion identification data.

4. The method of claim 3, further comprising:

(g) retrieving the image data of the selected portion from the first memory location;

(h) retrieving the image data of the remaining portion from the second memory location;

(i) reconfiguring the image data such that the remaining portion image is displayed adjacent to an enlarged image of the selected portion; and

(j) instructing the GUI to display a modified image based on the reconfigured image data.

5. The method of claim 4, further comprising:

- (k) searching the third memory location to determine if there is hidden supplemental data that corresponds to the selected portion;
- (l) incorporating hidden supplemental data found in the third memory location that corresponds to the selected portion into the enlarged image; and
- (m) instructing the GUI to display the enlarged image, wherein the incorporated hidden supplemental data is revealed.

6. The method of claim 2, further comprising:

- (d) a service provider offering a subscriber access to an enlargement feature of the GUI which implements method steps (a) - (c); and
- (e) in response to the subscriber accepting the offer of step (d), downloading an enlargement feature application program to a local device that controls the GUI.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein the enlargement feature is controlled by a wireless pointing device operated by the subscriber.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the pointing device is a mouse having a first button which, when depressed, implements method step (a), and a second button which, when depressed, implements method steps (b) and (c).

9. The method of claim 6, wherein the enlargement feature is operated in conjunction with an electronic programming guide (EPG).

10. The method of claim 6, wherein the service provider is a multiple system cable operator (MSO), and the local device is a set-top box in communication with a remote server maintained by the MSO and a television.

11. The method of claim 6, wherein the enlargement feature is controlled by an infrared (IR) remote control operated by the subscriber.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein step (a) further comprises superimposing on the original image a floating plane region in the GUI, wherein the location of the floating plane region changes in accordance with which portion of the original image is selected for enlargement.

13. The method of claim 1, wherein the remaining portion is not obscured by the enlarged image, and the enlarged image is not transparently superimposed on the remaining portion.

14. A method of enlarging a digital image displayed in a graphical user interface (GUI), the method comprising:

- (a) selecting for enlargement a portion of an original image displayed in the GUI;
- (b) determining if there is hidden supplemental data that corresponds to the selected portion; and
- (c) if it is determined that there is corresponding supplemental data, displaying an enlarged image of the selected portion, the enlarged image revealing the hidden supplemental data.

15. The method of claim 14, the method further comprising:

- (d) displaying, adjacent to an enlarged image of the selected portion, an image of the remaining portion of the original image that was not selected for enlargement, wherein the remaining portion does not include image data displayed by the enlarged image.

16. The method of claim 15, further comprising:

- (e) storing image data of the selected portion in a first memory location;
- (f) storing image data of the remaining portion in a second memory location; and
- (g) storing in a third memory location a table that correlates hidden supplemental data with selected image portion identification data.

17. The method of claim 16, further comprising:

- (h) retrieving the image data of the selected portion from the first memory

location;

(i) retrieving the image data of the remaining portion from the second memory location;

(j) reconfiguring the image data such that the remaining portion image is displayed adjacent to an enlarged image of the selected portion; and

(k) instructing the GUI to display a modified image based on the reconfigured image data.

18. The method of claim 17, further comprising:

(l) searching the third memory location to determine if there is hidden supplemental data that corresponds to the selected portion;

(m) incorporating hidden supplemental data found in the third memory location that corresponds to the selected portion into the enlarged image; and

(n) instructing the GUI to display the enlarged image, wherein the incorporated hidden supplemental data is revealed.

19. The method of claim 15, further comprising:

(e) a service provider offering a subscriber access to an enlargement feature of the GUI which implements method steps (a) - (d); and

(f) in response to the subscriber accepting the offer of step (e), downloading an enlargement feature application program to a local device that controls the GUI.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein the enlargement feature is operated in conjunction with an electronic programming guide (EPG).

21. The method of claim 19, wherein the service provider is a multiple system cable operator (MSO) and the local device is a set-top box in communication with a remote server maintained by the MSO and a television.

22. A method of providing an enlargement feature to a graphical user interface (GUI), the enlargement feature allowing a subscriber to enlarge a selected portion of an original

image displayed in the GUI such that the remaining portion of the original image that was not selected for enlargement is not obscured by the enlarged image, and the enlarged image is not transparently superimposed on the remaining portion, the method comprising:

- (a) a service provider offering the enlargement feature to the subscriber; and
- (b) in response to the subscriber accepting the offer of step (a), downloading an enlargement feature application program to a local device that controls the GUI.

23. The method of claim 22, wherein the application program comprises computer-executable instructions for:

- (i) selecting for enlargement a portion of an original image displayed in the GUI;
- and

- (ii) displaying, adjacent to an enlarged image of the selected portion, an image of the remaining portion of the original image that was not selected for enlargement, wherein the remaining portion does not include image data displayed by the enlarged image.

24. The method of claim 22, wherein the application program comprises computer-executable instructions for:

- (i) selecting for enlargement a portion of an original image displayed in the GUI;
- (ii) determining if there is hidden supplemental data that corresponds to the selected portion; and
- (iii) if it is determined that there is corresponding supplemental data, displaying an enlarged image of the selected portion, the enlarged image revealing the hidden supplemental data.

25. The method of claim 22, wherein the enlargement feature is operated in conjunction with an electronic programming guide (EPG).

26. The method of claim 22, wherein the service provider is a multiple system cable operator (MSO) and the local device is a set-top box in communication with a remote server maintained by the MSO and a television.

27. The method of claim 22, wherein the enlargement feature is controlled by an infrared (IR) remote control operated by the subscriber.

28. The method of claim 22, wherein the enlargement feature is controlled by a wireless pointing device operated by the subscriber.

29. Apparatus for enlarging a digital image displayed in a graphical user interface (GUI), the apparatus comprising:

(a) a first memory location that stores image data of a portion of an original image displayed in the GUI and selected for enlargement;

(b) a second memory location that stores image data associated with the remaining portion of the original image that was not selected for enlargement; and

(c) a processor that (i) retrieves the image data of the selected portion from the first memory location, (ii) retrieves the image data of the remaining portion from the second memory location, (iii) reconfigures the image data such that the remaining portion is displayed adjacent to an enlarged image of the selected portion, and (iv) instructs the GUI to display a modified image based on the reconfigured image data, wherein the remaining portion does not include image data displayed by the enlarged image.

30. Apparatus for enlarging a digital image displayed in a graphical user interface (GUI), the apparatus comprising:

(a) a first memory location that stores image data of a portion of an original image displayed in the GUI and selected for enlargement;

(b) a second memory location that stores a table that correlates hidden supplemental data with selected image portion identification data; and

(c) a processor that (i) searches the second memory location to determine if there is hidden supplemental data that corresponds to the selected portion, (ii) incorporates any hidden supplemental data found in the second memory location that corresponds to the selected portion into the enlarged image, and (iii) instructs the GUI to display the enlarged image, wherein the incorporated hidden supplemental data is revealed by the enlarged image.

31. A method of displaying a digital image, the method comprising:
(a) displaying an original image having a plurality of image portions selectable for enlargement;
(b) selecting one of the image portions; and
(c) displaying, adjacent to an enlarged image of the selected image portion, the remaining selectable image portions that were not selected.

32. The method of claim 31, further comprising:
(d) storing image data of the selected image portion in a first memory location;
(e) storing image data of the remaining selectable image portions in a second memory location; and
(f) storing in a third memory location a table that correlates hidden supplemental data with selectable image portion identification data.

33. The method of claim 32, further comprising:
(g) retrieving the image data of the selected image portion from the first memory location;
(h) retrieving the image data of the remaining selectable image portions from the second memory location;
(i) reconfiguring the image data such that the remaining selectable image portions are displayed adjacent to an enlarged image of the selected portion; and
(j) displaying a modified image based on the reconfigured image data.

34. The method of claim 33, further comprising:
(k) searching the third memory location to determine if there is hidden supplemental data that corresponds to the selected image portion;
(l) incorporating any hidden supplemental data found in the third memory location that corresponds to the selected image portion into the enlarged image; and
(m) displaying the enlarged image, wherein the incorporated hidden supplemental data is revealed.

35. The method of claim 31, wherein the selectable image portions that were not selected for enlargement do not include image data displayed by the enlarged image.

36. The method of claim 31, wherein the digital image is an electronic programming guide (EPG).

37. The method of claim 31, wherein each of the selectable image portions comprise a window displaying CATV programming information.

38. The method of claim 31, wherein the plurality of selectable image portions in step (a) are substantially of equal size.

39. The method of claim 31, wherein the enlarged image is displayed in a window larger than windows containing the remaining selectable image portions.

40. The method of claim 31, further comprising:

(d) a service provider offering a subscriber access to an enlargement feature which implements method steps (a) - (c); and

(e) in response to the subscriber accepting the offer of step (d), downloading an enlargement feature application program to a local device that controls the display of the digital image.

41. The method of claim 31, wherein the digital image is displayed in a graphical user interface (GUI).

42. A method of displaying a digital image, the method comprising:

(a) displaying an original image having a plurality of image portions selectable for enlargement;

(b) selecting one of the image portions; and

(c) displaying, adjacent to an enlarged image of the selected portion, at least the selectable image portions that were immediately adjacent to the selected image portion prior to being enlarged.

43. The method of claim 42, wherein step (b) further comprises superimposing on the original image a floating plane region, wherein the location of the floating plane region changes in accordance with which portion of the original image is selected for enlargement.

44. The method of claim 42, wherein the digital image is displayed in a graphical user interface (GUI).